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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
EB-07 FEA-01 COME-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 /050 W
----------122118Z 073188 /66
O R 121810Z ZFF RUQMKW RUDOHAA
FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
TO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5422
USIAC, WASHDC 48
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
USLO, RIYADH 48
AMEMBASSY MANAMA NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS SOPN, KU, TC, BA, SA, QA
SUBJECT: GULF WBUR BYNKMERICAN JOURNALIST

REF: (A) KUWAIT 2576 (NOTAL), (B) DHAHRAN 0534

1. ARAMC SENIOR EXECUTIVES SHARE YOUR CONCERN AND THAT OF KUWAIT MINISTRY OF INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBILITY GROUP OF AMERICAN JOURNALISTS

MAY DWINDLE TO FOUR WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS. ARAMCO CHAIRMAN FRANK JUNGERS, SEVERAL OF HIS VICE PRESIDENTS AND I MADE SERIOUS EFFORT EVENING MAY 11 AT DINNER IN JUNGERS HOME TO CONVINCE THE GROUP TO STAY TOGETHER FOR REST OF TOUR.

2. UNFORTUNATELY, FOUR JOURNALISTS FEEL THEY CANNOT CONTINUE FOR FOLLOWING REASONS WHICH THEY CONSIDER BINDING:
A) NEWSWEEK - MUST DEPART FOR A COURT HEARING.
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B) CHICAGO DAILY NEWS -- ORDERED TO TEHRAN FOR SECRETARY VANCE VISIT.
C) US NEWS AND WORLD REPORT - ORDERED TO CAIRO RE ELECTION.
D) WALL STREET JOURNAL- COMPELLED TO SPEND SEVERAL DAYS WRITING TO MEET SEVERAL URGENT DEADLINES.

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3. ARAMCO IS CONTINUING TO PRESS US NEWS REP TO CONTINUE SINCE HIS REASON APPEARS LESS THAN OVERWHELMING BUT CONSIDERS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO PERSUADE OTHERS. FURTHER, THE GROUP DID NOT WANT TO LEAVE THIS MORNING FOR RUB 'AL KHALI AND BHARAIN TRIP BECAUSE OF LARGE ARAMCO ABQAIQ FIRE AND IMMEDIATE STRONG INTERNATIONAL PRESS INTEREST IN IT. IT IS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY, WE FEEL, THAT SOME GROUP MEMBERS MAY WANT TO RETURN TO DHAHRAN FROM MANAMA
OR KUWAIT TO COVER THE FIRE STORY, PARTICULARLY SINCE SOME OF US PRESS IS APPARENTLY REPORTING (INACUURATELY, ACCORDING TO ARAMCO) THAT SAUDI CRUDE PRODUCTION WILL BE CUT BY 6 MILLION BPD BECAUSE OF THE FIRE. ALL "DROPOUTS" MADE IT CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THEY DID NOT WISH IN ANY WAY TO INDICATE A DESIRE TO GIVE SHORT SHRIFT TO THE GULF STATES.

4.ARAMCO VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS, FAISAL AL BASSAM, SAYS HE SENT TWO CABLES TO KUWAIT MINISTRY OF INFORMATION A WEEK AGO CONCERNING POSSIBILITY OF A REDUCED GROUP, BUT RECEIVED NO CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT OF THOSE MESSAGES DESPITE HIS REQUEST FOR CONFIRMATION. HE ADDS THAT HE SENT FURTHER WORD TODAY THROUGH A BAPCO OFFICIAL IN BAHRAIN WHO IN TURN TELEPHONE KUWAIT INFORMATION MINISTRY.

5. ACCORDING TO AL BASSAM, MORRIS OF LOS ANGELES TIMES DID NOT JOIN THE GROUP.

6. THE JOURNALISTS SEEMED GENUINELY IMPRESSED BY NUMBER AND QUALITY OF MINISTERIAL INTERVIEWS IN JIDDA (EIGHT MINISTER, CROWN PRINCE, AND HEAD OF SAUDI ARABIAN MONETARY AGENCY). THEY DESCRIBED THE SAG OFFICIALS AS RELAXED, REMARKABLY CANDID,ARTICULATE AND FRIENDLY TO THE US. (SEVEN OF THE EIGHT MINISTERS WERE US-EDUCATED). THE GROUP ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR EFFICIENCY WITH WHICH ARAMCO AND
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SAG HAD ORGANIZED THE TOUR AS WELL AS FOR THE AERIAL TOUR AND ARAMCO
BRIEFINGS ON THE MAJOR PETROLEUM AND INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE OF SAUDI ARABIA. THEY FELT THE TIMING OF THE SAUDI PORTION OF THE TRIP TO BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL, JUST PRIOR TO CROWN PRINCE FAHID'S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES.
BUSHNELL

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Message Attributes

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